

LANGUAGE ARTS, PART II: LANGUAGE USAGE
English, Composition, Grammar and Usage
Spelling

COMMUNICATIONS
Speech
Journalism

ADOPTION EFFECTIVE
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ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS
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Position Statement: Language Arts Part II: Writing (English, composition/grammar/usage)

The International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English worked jointly for the last several years to involve thousands of teachers of English language arts and reading to develop twelve language arts standards. These standards assume that literacy development begins before children enter school, as they experience and experiment with such literacy activities as reading, writing, and associating spoken words with graphic representations. The standards provide a framework for development of school-, district-, as well as state-wide curricula, instruction, and assessment, which productively enhances previous language development. Although not prescriptions for particular curricula or programs, the standards provide necessary opportunities and resources for all students to develop and, therefore, pursue life's goals, and participate as informed and productive members of society.

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their

interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences, and for different purposes.
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.
10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Position Statement: Spelling

Recent spelling research asserts several significant principles related to its development (Sitton, 1995):

1. Spelling mastery is the ability to spell words correctly in everyday writing.
2. The best source of spelling words are high frequency writing words that are well-established in students' reading, speaking, and listening vocabularies.
3. In order to learn to spell words, students must be able to form correct visual images of entire words.
4. The only spelling rules for which students should be held accountable are those that apply to a large number of words, and that have relatively few exceptions.
5. The single most important factor contributing to spelling success is that of administering a pretest, which students correct themselves with the support and direction of a teacher.
6. Limiting daily structured spelling practice to ten to fifteen minutes produces best skills.
7. A test-study-test method of spelling instruction produces more superior results than that of a study-test method.
8. Spelling words are best presented in a list, rather than within a sentence or paragraph.
9. Selecting hard words for spelling study has not proven particularly helpful for improving spelling skills.

Additional research confirms that one of the most important factors in learning to spell is that of a child's own self-evaluation of a spelling test or pre-test under the direction of a teacher (Ellis, Standal, Pennau, and Rummel, 1989). A multi-sensory process, spelling instruction must incorporate auditory, visual, as well as kinesthetic modes of learning (Hodges, 1981, and Heillerich, 1982).

Position Statement: Communications (speech/journalism)

The ability to communicate is a necessary, lifelong, skill that enables students to act as responsible, contributing citizens in the community, state, and nation. In order to succeed in a world of interaction, students must develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence to speak and listen in a variety of settings and to understand the complexities of the communication process.

Journalists gather facts, interpret facts, respect facts, write factual articles under pressure of time, and produce instant text. High school journalists do for the school community what adult reporters do for the larger community: they inform, they interpret, they educate, and they entertain.